FWIS 100: Fundamentals of Academic Communication
Gender & Sexuality
Rice University, Fall 2017
Section 003, MWF 1:00-1:50, HRZ 211

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Course Description

This course explores gender and sexuality with special attention to multiethnic communities in the United States. By prioritizing writing and communication skill development, this course examines issues of gender and sexuality through lectures, discussions, and fieldwork in Houston, bringing to life struggles over identity and experience by female and queer people specifically. Through critical analyses of gender and sexuality, students will investigate topics such as identity, race, ethnicity, politics, feminist and queer movements, and U.S. pop culture. This course will explore the relationship between gender, sexuality, social change, and social structure, focusing on the ways in which we encounter and shape everyday life and how people and socially constructed institutions have responded to them. We will look at how and why experiences, social roles, identity formations, and experiences vary according to time, place, and positionality. Course texts will include texts by women of color feminist writers such as bell hooks, Gloria Anzaldúa, Audre Lorde, and Cherríe Moraga. As we reflect on these themes, students will use writing, discussion, and presentations as tools to engage with gender and sexuality, adding their own voices to the conversation.

Goals & Objectives

The goal of this course is to support students as they transition to university coursework by developing the reading, writing and discussion and presentation skills necessary for academic success. Students will learn that engaged academic writing does not simply report knowledge, but deepens and expands it by organizing observations into reflective meaning. It is important to remember that effective writing is a skill that anyone can acquire through guided practice and discipline.

By the end of the semester, FWIS 100 students should be able to,

1. Comprehend academic readings. Specifically, students should be able to identify the purpose, context, and structure of the text and articulate its argument
2. Create academic communication that is appropriate in content, structure and style for specific audiences, contexts, and purposes.
3. Compose well-structured academic essays. Specifically, essays should include the following:
    - a clear purpose;
    - evidence that supports its claims;

    - a clear organization with cohesive paragraphs and appropriate transitional language; and
    - language that conforms in tone, word choice, and structure to the standards of formal academic writing and speaking.
4. Manage the writing process from pre-writing to the final draft. Students should produce at least one revision of each major assignment, and develop specific strategies to improve their personal writing and revision process.
5. Incorporate the work of others into their academic arguments. Specifically, students should be comfortable summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting other texts; and identifying and citing borrowed ideas and language in their own work.
6. Plan, develop, and practice effective oral presentations. In particular, students should be comfortable with the best practices of oral argument, including audience and purpose analysis, language and gesture, audience engagement, and visual design.
7. Feel confident participating in academic discussions. Specifically, students should acquire the necessary language to articulate their position or observation, and to synthesize and elaborate, complicate, or disagree with another's ideas.

Course Information

Canvas: All class information, including this syllabus, can be found on the course Canvas site.

- ✓ "Modules" (daily lessons & homework)
  You will have some form of homework for every class. For daily class preparation, including specific homework assignments, students must consult the appropriate date in the Modules section of the class Canvas site and complete the homework as assigned.
- ✓ "Assignments"
  Detailed instructions for major assignments can be found in the Assignments section of Canvas.
- ✓ "Resources" (readings & lesson activities)
  Readings and other resources can be found in the Resources section of the Canvas site.

Materials:

- Photocopied materials will be available for downloading from the Canvas course website. Active, critical reading is an important skill to be developed in this course, and it is essential that you have a physical text in front of you to mark and annotate. Therefore, *You are required to print all assigned PDF reading materials and bring them to class for discussion.* Failure to arrive without a physical copy of the assigned text will affect your participation grade.

Evaluation

Coursework:

Your grade will be based on the following categories:

25% Participation, Preparation, and Brief Assignments
25% Oral Presentations
50% Written Essays

Grading Scale:

98 or above = A+	81 to less than 84 = B-	68 to less than 70 = D+
93 to less than 98 = A	78 to less than 81 = C+	63 to less than 68 = D
90 to less than 93 = A-	74 to less than 78 = C	60 to less than 63 = D-
88 to less than 90 = B+	70 to less than 74 = C-	Less than 60 = F
84 to less than 88 = B		

Policies

Writing Consultations: FWIS 100 consists of three hours of classroom meeting time per week, plus one individual consultation meeting every two weeks. You may schedule an appointment through Rice's Center for Written, Oral and Visual Communication, on the CWOVC website (http://cwovc.rice.edu/home). *It is your responsibility to schedule a minimum of one writing consultation every two weeks with one of the assigned consultants for your section. Please note that missing a consultation is the same as missing a class and will be counted toward your total number of absences*.

Grading / Add-Drop: Please note that FWIS and FWIS 100 courses are different than many other university courses in two important respects:

1. A FWIS course may *not* be taken for a Pass/Fail grade.
2. A FWIS course may *not* be dropped after the second week of class.

Attendance:

In a course of this nature, your attendance and active participation in classroom discussion and group work is essential. *You are allowed a maximum of three unexcused absences, after which each additional unexcused absence will lower your Participation & Preparation grade by one half a letter grade.* Please note that three late arrivals in excess of ten minutes will count as one absence.

An absence will only be excused in two cases: 1) If you anticipate an absence due to a university-related activity or religious observance, you must notify me before the missed class day, and all assignments and evaluations must be completed before the missed class. 2) In the case of a true emergency the absence will be excused if the student makes a contact with me before the next class s/he will attend, and meets an agreed-upon deadline for making any missed work. All lessons and assignments can be found on Canvas; *I am not responsible for keeping track of your missed work, regardless of the excuse for the absence*.

Late Work: All written assignments carry a penalty of one half letter grade (+ or -) for each class day late. Missed presentations may not be made up unless in the case of a true emergency, in which case they must be made up in a timely manner, as agreed upon with me on the first day of the student's return to class.

Classroom Guidelines:

- ✓ Please bring a pen and paper to class.
- ✓ No cell phones during class – keep them in your bag. You may use a tablet or laptop for lesson-related research and note-taking. Please refrain from all non-class related activities on your device during class time.

- ✓ You are welcome to eat and drink in class; please clean your area thoroughly before leaving the classroom.
- ✓ Late arrivals are very distracting; please arrive on time. In the case of an unavoidable tardy, please wait for a break in the discussion before taking your seat quietly and discreetly.

Communication: It is important that I be able to communicate with you throughout the semester. I ask that you review your Rice email at least once before every class. As this is class policy, it will be assumed that you have received any announcements or messages I send.

Honor Code:
"On my honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized aid on this assignment."
The Honor Code system and academic fraud are described and explained in the Honor System Handbook (http://honor.rice.edu/honor-system-handbook/), and you are responsible for understanding the university's rules regarding academic integrity. You should familiarize yourself with the code. In this course, you are expected to do the actual writing of your assignments on your own, with no outside help from anyone else. However, you are strongly encouraged to collaborate on all other aspects of your coursework, including discussing assignments, reading each other's work, and making suggestions for editing and revision. We will discuss strategies for effective collaboration on writing and presentation projects in class.

Disability Support Services: Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations must speak with the instructor during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities will also need to contact Disability Support Services in the Ley Student Center.

Assignments

- Participation & Preparation (15%) — Because this is a skill-based class, your thorough preparation and active participation in each class is essential. This portion of your grade is based on the following:
  - Attendance and prompt arrival.
  - Preparation of reading and viewing materials.
    You are expected to arrive for class having read/viewed and annotated assigned texts. You must have physical copies of assigned readings with you for class.
  - Active engagement in class activities, including class and small-group discussions.
  - Biweekly consultations with CWOVC FWIS 100 writing consultants.
- Brief Writing & Presentation Assignments (10%) – Throughout the semester, you will be assigned a series of brief essays and presentations, in addition to a final reflection essay.
- Presentation #1: Key Terms (10%) – 5-6 minute group presentation about a key term in gender and sexuality studies
- Presentation #2: Gender & Sexuality in Houston (15%) – 5-6 minute individual presentation of a moment from the Houston We Have History and its relationship to the themes of the class

- Essay #1: In Other Words (15%) – 1-2 page summary of an academic article
- Essay #2: A Thoughtful Response (15%) – 3-4 page response to *A Murder in Montrose*
- Essay #3: The Meaning of the Story (20%) – 5-6 page, research-based analysis of *Swimming While Drowning* (Play), *A Jihad for Love* (Documentary), or *La Güera* (Essay).

Detailed instructions for each of these assignments will be available on Canvas, along with specific rubrics that evaluate content, organization, and language.

Essay Revisions: You have the option of submitting an official revision of your essays, *provided you schedule a consultation with me and submit the revised paper within one week of receiving your initial grade*. All essay revisions must be turned in as a physical copy, accompanied by a physical copy of the original essay printed along with my comments and markings. The final grade will be an average of the original and revised grades.

Formatting: All written material for FWIS 100 should be formatted as follows:

- Times New Roman, 12 point
- Double-spaced
- 1" margins
- Name, course, date in upper left-hand corner
- Descriptive title, centered

Course Schedule & Important Dates

The following schedule is subject to change in order to accommodate the pace and particular needs and interests of the class. Students should *always consult the online version of the course Syllabus*, available on the Syllabus section of the course Canvas site.

Week 1

M 8/21	*First Day of Classes*, Introduction to Course
W 8/23	*Diagnostic writing*
F 8/25	What are Gender and Sexuality?

Week 2

M 8/28	Gender 101
W 8/30	Intro to Transgender
F 9/1	*Presentation skills*

Week 3

M 9/4	Labor Day, **no class**
W 9/6	What is Feminism?
F 9/8	Men in Feminist Struggle

Week 4

M 9/11	Sexuality 101
W 9/13	*Critical reading skills*
F 9/15	LGBTQ+

Week 5

M 9/18	*Summary workshop*
W 9/20	*Revision workshop*
F 9/22	Intersectionality 101
	Essay #1: In Other Words

Week 6

M 9/25	*Thesis statement workshop*
W 9/27	*Presentation skills workshop*
F 9/29	Meet in groups to practice presentation, No class meeting.

Week 7

M 10/2	**Presentation #1: Key Terms**
W 10/4	Montrose, Houston
F 10/6	Spectrum South

Week 8

M 10/9	Midterm Recess, **no class**
W 10/11	*A Murder in Montrose*
F 10/13	*Revision Workshop*

Week 9

M 10/16	Inclusion and Equality
W 10/18	Queer Diversities
F 10/20	Bisexuality 101

Week 10

M 10/23	Chicana Lesbians
	Essay #2: A Thoughtful Response
W 10/25	Age, Race, Class, Sex
F 10/27	Houston fieldwork, no class meeting

Week 11

M 10/30	*Presentation workshop*
W 11/1	**Presentation #2: Gender & Sexuality in Houston**

F 11/3 **Presentation #2: Gender & Sexuality in Houston**

Week 12

M 11/6 Queer People of Color
W 11/8 Research Skills I: Library Scavenger Hunt (class meets in Fondren Library)
F 11/10 Story Circles

Week 13

M 11/13 *Purpose statement workshop*
W 11/15 Research Circles
F 11/17 Presentation of secondary research

Week 14

M 11/20 Individual Consultations, no class meeting
W 11/22 *Style workshop*
F 11/24 Thanksgiving Recess, **no class**

Week 15

M 11/27 *Thesis presentation*
W 11/29 *Partner revision workshop*
F 12/1 *Last Class Day*
Roundtable Discussion: *What are gender and sexuality, and in what ways do they influence experience and identity?*
Essay #3: The Meaning of the Story

12/2 – 12/5 *Study Days*
12/6 – 12/113 *Final Exam Period*, There will be no final exam for this class.